



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## BABBLE OF THE BOULEVARD

(Special Correspondence of THE COLLECTOR.)

NOT long ago some relics of Napoleon I, and among them the famous redingote grise immortalized by Béranger, were removed from an obscure corner of the Louvre to a more appropriate resting place under the dome of the Invalides.

France preserves with patriotic solicitude the souvenirs of her departed monarchs, the garter of Francis I, the richly embroidered costumes of Louis XIV, the sword of Henry IV, and every article of personal property or wearing apparel from the extensive wardrobe of the First Consul; his robes of state, his jewels, his hose and his gloves.

More precious, though, than these cherished mementoes of a great man, more highly prized than his spurs, his boots, his snuff-box or his cocked hat, is an object that still remains intact in one of France's obscure provincial families.

Nothing within the bounds of reason would induce its present owners to part with it. It came direct to them from him whose bones now lie in the expanse of that same gilded cupola that flashes its glorious splendor athwart the silver Seine at close of day.

Its priceless value lies in the fact that there exists, nor can there exist an object more closely identified with the immortal Corsican, the hero of Austerlitz and Ulm, than does it, a simple bit of Sèvres porcelain.

Moreover, the token possesses a double charm, for it combines art with utility, beauty with undeniable intrinsic worth.

It is not a mere useless ornament of the drawing-room, though its historical associations may have since led to its becoming such.

In short, it is nothing more nor less than an article of household furniture of intrinsic personal utility, to be found in the sleeping apartments of all well-regulated families.

Its history is well worth relating.

At the period when Bonaparte was still a young officer—young in years though old in rank—he had for a saddler a man named Gagnery, who kept a harness shop in the Rue Chauterine, afterwards called the Rue de la Victoire.

To this honest fellow he went, a few days subsequent to his having received the appointment as General in Chief of the Expedition to Egypt, and tapping him familiarly on the shoulder, said:

"See here, Gagnery, I have received promotion and am shortly to set out in command of the army in Egypt. I am in pressing need of a new outfit, but the devil of it is I haven't a sou to pay it. Can you trust me? If you can, I promise to discharge all indebtedness upon my return."

Gagnery was not wanting of confidence in his patron. He fitted him out in superb fashion. His bill amounted to 10,000 francs.

Immediately upon his return from the Nile, Napoleon liquidated the account. Later, upon being crowned, he proved his gratitude to Gagnery by attaching the latter to his retinue, with the title of *Sellier de l'Empereur*.

It was in this quality that the faithful saddler followed his sovereign through all the campaigns of the Empire, quitting his service only upon his banishment to Elba, on the 28th day of April, 1814.

Before his embarkment at Fréjus, Napoleon distributed among his companions, as he grasped the hand of each, a trifling souvenir.

Gagnery was there, but singularly enough had been overlooked.

The ship was about to set sail when the saddler, elbowing his way along the deck to where the exile stood, touched his arm and murmured: "And I, my King—am I to receive nothing?"

"Alas, my poor friend," responded the Emperor, "I have nothing more to give—*tiens, veux-tu mon vase de nuit, c'est tout ce qui me reste?*"

Without waiting for a reply he ran below to his cabin, and at the last moment threw into the outstretched hands of the saddler, who was now in a wherry at the ship's side, the fragile earthen vessel.

It was an exquisite bit of china, of matchless enamel, of an oblong form, and evidently designed for travelling purposes. It was provided with a slender handle, and encircled by a band of frosted gold bearing the imperial initial N, surmounted by a crown and enclosed within a wreath.

The recipient, through his position and perquisites, had long before become rich. He retired to the village of Essonnes, near Paris, where he inhabited a little property called "Navelle."

Here he lived for the remainder of his days, a jealous guardian of his unique and curious souvenir.

The precious vase de nuit was given a place of honor on the mantelpiece, and when its owner received, now and then, a visit from his old comrades in arms, the greatest proof of his friendship for them, the most marked demonstration of the tender memories of other days, was to bring forth the cherished bowl and drink from it, in silent reverence, the health of their unfortunate Emperor.

\*\*\*

As Zola (Emile) has of late made a close study of martial topics for his next book, "La Guerre," his opinion on the relative positions of France and Germany is worth having. The master says that he is firmly convinced of the fact that the disasters of 1870 have, in a great measure, been beneficial to France. They were a terrible but a neces-

sary lesson. The nation became regenerated, as it were, after a bath of blood. She has grown stronger and more powerful than ever. The fact of Germany's seeking to ally herself with Italy and Austria is sufficient proof of the Teutonic estimate of the Gallic forces. "*Qui vive?*" is the question which Europe puts to herself to-day, and the response comes quickly: "France!"

\*\*\*

Parisians do not take so kindly to fiction in book form as one might suppose. Formerly the yellow-covered novel was to be seen on every library table and in the hands of every traveller by boat, rail or car. There is now, however, a crisis threatened in the book trade, and novels are at a discount. It is estimated that there are from fifteen to twenty popular authors, whose books fulfil the requirements of the publishers, which means a sale of at least 30,000 copies. Zola (Emile) and a few others reach this point easily, but it has happened lately that one of the most celebrated of the latter-day fictionists had the misfortune to find that 45,000 copies of his last production were returned to the publisher by the Maison Hachette, which has the monopoly of railway bookstalls. Of a splendidly-bound book, by a famous author, ornamented with designs by eminent artists and advertised in the most extensive and elaborate manner, only one copy was sold. Of another work of the same description, but less expensive, only six copies could be unloaded upon the public, the remainder being handed over at a ridiculous price to second-hand dealers on the quays, where they became "plugs," a constant source of annoyance to the bouquiniste and an eyesore to fureteurs. It is stated, furthermore, that one publisher in Paris has now on hand three millions of volumes which he cannot sell. The fact is that the authors themselves are to blame for this crisis in the trade, by allowing their works to appear in serial form in daily newspapers before final publication. People read feuilletons as eagerly as ever in France, and, what is more, they cut them out and sew them together so as to avoid having to buy the stories eventually in book form. If such authors as Guy de Maupassant, Jules Mary, Georges Ohnet, or Catulle Mendès are better compensated by first running their work as serials in the local and provincial press, well and good. The very fact of their doing so, though, should bar all excuse for the howling they set up afterwards.

PARIS, November 2, 1891.

JOHN PRESTON BEECHER.

## THE WATER COLOR SOCIETY AND ETCHING CLUB

THE twenty-fifth annual exhibition of the American Water Color Society will be opened in the National Academy of Design on the 1st of February, 1892, and will close on Saturday evening, February 27th. Original works in water colors only, which have never before been publicly exhibited in the city of New York, will be received for this exhibition from the 7th to the 9th of January, inclusive. A commission of fifteen per cent will be charged upon sales. Works from non-resident artists must be sent to some consignee in New York to act as agent for the exhibitor. The following firms attend to such business: J. Harrison Mills, Artists' Packing and Shipping Co., 147 East 23d street; Beers Brothers, 1264 Broadway; George F. Of, 4 Clinton Place; D. Dinan, corner of Broadway and 12th street; W. S. Budworth & Son, 1 West 14th street. And in Europe: Thos. Meadows & Co., 3 Rue Scribe, Paris; 35 Milk street, London; 25 Water street, Liverpool; 10 Hanover street, Glasgow; 63 Piccadilly, Manchester. The Wm. T. Evans Prize of \$300 for the most meritorious picture in the exhibition, painted in this country by an American artist, will be awarded by the Society as early as practicable after the opening of the exhibition.

The New York Etching Club will hold its tenth annual exhibition at the Academy, coincident with that of the American Water Color Society. Works for the exhibition must be ready the first week in January. Following the recent success which has attended its present policy, the club proposes to devote the space at its disposal to work of only the highest artistic excellence, and of a character consistent with what is understood by the term painter-etching. The catalogue for 1892 will contain five etchings, portraits of the etchers, a short biographical sketch of each, and a practical treatise on the art of etching by Mr. James D. Smillie.

"A speculator," says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "with a five-pound note to spare, might have set himself up in the matter of 'first editions' yesterday at Sotheby's. A bundle of six volumes, of which three were of the first issues of Tennyson's poems, realized only 7s. Worse than this, three lots of Browning volumes, each containing nothing but first editions, uncut, did not in any case fetch more than 36s.; and another lot of six volumes, of which three were the premier impressions of the same poet's works, realized just 11s."